

INTERNATIONAL LONGSHORE AND WAREHOUSE UNION
PACIFIC COAST PENSIONERS ASSOCIATION ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
LABOR ARCHIVES OF WASHINGTON
UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON LIBRARIES SPECIAL COLLECTIONS
KRISTI ANN HAGEN OF ILWU LOCAL 19 & 98, PCPA

INTERVIEWEE: KRISTI HAGEN

INTERVIEWER: HARVEY SCHWARTZ

SUBJECTS: FEMALE LONGSHOREMAN; LASHING; LOADING HIDES; FIRST FEMALE FOREMAN; DISCRIMINATION LAWSUIT; ACCIDENTS AND DEATHS ON THE JOB

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[00:00:00] **HARVEY:** This is Harvey Schwartz. I'm in Long Beach, California. Today is September 18, 2017, and this is part of the PCPA-ILWU Oral History Project.

Kristi, can you give me your name, your full name, and where you were born and when you were born?

[00:00:19] **KRISTI HAGEN:** Kristi Ann Hagen. Do you want me to spell it as well?

[00:00:22] **HARVEY:** Please.

[00:00:22] **KRISTI:** K-R-I-S-T-I A-N-N H-A-G-E-N. I was born in Renton, Washington on January 29, 1949.

[00:00:35] **HARVEY:** Okay. Tell me a little bit about your parents, if you don't mind—where did they come from, what countries they came from?

[00:00:47] **KRISTI:** Well, my parents are both American citizens. My grandparents came over from Germany, Sweden and Norway. By the time they had my parents, they had settled in Montana. I think before that they lived in Michigan, or I'm not quite sure. But both my parents were born and raised and went to high school in Montana and met there.

[00:01:16] **HARVEY:** Okay. What did your dad do for work?

[00:01:24] **KRISTI:** He was an ice cream man. He had Hagen's hand-packed ice cream when I was a kid. He had a storefront where he made ice cream, and he hand-packed it into paper cartons and sold it. And our freezer was always full of five gallons of different-flavored ice creams. [laughing] It was wonderful. Then when I got a little older, he took over a Triple X root beer franchise from our neighbor. He bought out a root beer franchise and operated that, did distributing of the syrups and stuff.

[00:02:00] **HARVEY:** Was this in Renton?

[00:02:02] **KRISTI:** Well, I lived in south Seattle, which is right on the door of Renton.

[00:02:06] **HARVEY:** Okay, and that's where you grew up?

[00:02:08] **KRISTI:** Yes.

[00:02:09] **HARVEY:** What did your mom do?

[00:02:11] **KRISTI:** She worked at Boeing when I was in grade school, as a secretary, and then she worked at a photography shop as a secretary. She was basically a secretary. She worked all my childhood.

[00:02:25] **HARVEY:** Did they have any union background?

[00:02:26] **KRISTI:** No, none.

[00:02:29] **HARVEY:** Anybody else in your family have any union background?

[00:02:32] **KRISTI:** No. I was the first.

[00:02:34] **HARVEY:** You were the first. Okay. Tell me about growing up, you know, being young, what you do when you're a kid, going to school.

[00:02:46] **KRISTI:** I hated school from the beginning. My mother used to tell stories about in kindergarten, I would cry when she left me. I would get sick, I mean, tell the nurse I had stomach aches. Here's the thing. My sister was two and a half years older than me, and she used to come home and teach me, so by the time I went into kindergarten, I already knew how to read and write. And so this is just my theory—and I think it's probably true—school was very boring for me because I already knew everything they were teaching, and do I didn't want to be there. I got stomach aches and was constantly trying to get out of it [laughing] until I turned 15, and then I dropped in tenth grade. Two weeks before the end of tenth grade, I just left school and never looked back at high school. I went on to college, however. I went to the University of Washington for a while, and I went to a couple of junior colleges. Took a GED when I turned 18.

[00:03:44] **HARVEY:** Okay. And then was it after you got your GED that you went on to UW?

[00:03:51] **KRISTI:** Yes.

[00:03:52] **HARVEY:** How did you get into UW if you've taken a GED, you didn't take regular high school? Can you get into UW anyway?

[00:03:59] **KRISTI:** Yeah, I had high scores on my GED because I'm smart, or I was then.

[00:04:04] **HARVEY:** Yeah, so that got you into UW?

[00:04:06] **KRISTI:** I guess, I don't know, I was accepted. And they actually gave me what they call a career battery of tests or what your aptitude is, and I was all set to go on and be a psychopharmacologist—that really interested me to figure out how drugs affect behavior and blah blah blah. But, of course, I started doing a lot of drugs, because it was the 60s, and that kind of side-railed any plans I had. [laughing]

[00:04:34] **HARVEY:** Oh, well.

[00:04:34] **KRISTI:** So I did a lot of that. I'd go to school for a couple of quarters, and then I'd drop acid or something and drop out of school and go drive to California. You know? I mean, it was the 60s.

[00:04:45] **HARVEY:** It was the 1960s.

[00:04:46] **KRISTI:** Yes, yes.

[00:04:49] **HARVEY:** Were you politically active at all at that time?

[00:04:52] **KRISTI:** No, not really. Not really. That's kind of one of my regrets that I was pretty—you know, I gave birth to my first child in March 1970, when I had just turned 21, so most of my young adulthood was taken up with raising babies. You know? I mean, I knew things were happening out there, but, you know, I had two kids and I wasn't about to jump in the car and drive to wherever.

[00:05:22] **HARVEY:** Yeah, yeah. You have two children?

[00:05:24] **KRISTI:** I do.

[00:05:26] **HARVEY:** Did you get married at that time?

[00:05:27] **KRISTI:** I did. My husband—my boyfriend at the time—I was living in a commune, and he was an old friend of mine from high school that I'd just run into on the campus of the UW, of all places, one day. And he came and visited me in the commune, and he ended up moving in with me because he had no place to go. And then I got pregnant and he got his draft notice. And so I said, "Hey, let's get married, because I don't want you to go to 'Nam." I was definitely against the war.

[00:05:57] **HARVEY:** Sure. You were a child of the 60s [to a great extent?].

[00:05:59] **KRISTI:** Yeah, absolutely. So we got married, and that was probably my worst mistake because he was a real jerk, but, you know. And then as soon as we got married, he never got called up, so I don't know if it was just some bullshit he told me. I can't imagine that he lied to me about that, but it was funny, they kind of lost his whole papers to go to 'Nam.

[00:06:22] **HARVEY:** So he was in the military?

[00:06:26] **KRISTI:** No, no, he wasn't in the military.

[00:06:27] **HARVEY:** He wasn't called up?

[00:06:28] **KRISTI:** No, no.

[00:06:28] **HARVEY:** Okay. How long did you stay married to this guy?

[00:06:33] **KRISTI:** Oh, a long time. I lived with him less than two years. I got pregnant with my daughter by him. Oh god, this is not necessarily going to be in your book is it? Because it's very exposing. I have final approval, right?

[Transcriber note: she may want to seal this]

[00:06:52] **HARVEY:** Sure.

[00:06:53] **KRISTI:** Okay. So I got pregnant with my daughter and I really strongly considered aborting her because I was so unhappy with my husband. I didn't want to be stuck with another kid—be tied to him—because he was an asshole. I'm remembering it was like 300 bucks, which I didn't have because we were broke hippies, and so I gave birth to my daughter. I don't regret it now, of course. I'm very grateful I didn't abort her, but it was . . . it was . . .

[00:07:25] **HARVEY:** Yeah. So anyway, when you're in your twenties, you're on your own basically with your two kids?

[00:07:36] **KRISTI:** Yeah.

[00:07:37] **HARVEY:** What did you do for work and stuff?

[00:07:40] **KRISTI:** Oh, I was on welfare. I was on welfare in those days, and that's when I started school, too. They put me through school at Olympic College. So I went to school for a while, but welfare was easy in those days, you know. They gave you some food stamps and a little bit of money, and it was easy to live. I was living in Port Angeles, which was out in the country, you know, the whole hippie lifestyle.

[00:08:04] **HARVEY:** Sure.

[00:08:06] **KRISTI:** But I didn't divorce Patrick for many, many years. I think we were married for almost 20 years because I just never wanted to get married to anybody again. [laughing] The scene with him was so difficult, I just never wanted to do it again. So, yeah, we didn't live together but we stayed married for quite a while—actually till I bought my first house in 1980 and I had to get him to sign a quit claim deed, and I think that's when I actually divorced him, but I'mnot sure of that.

[00:08:37] **HARVEY:** What were you doing before 1980? Were you doing any work?

[00:08:42] **KRISTI:** I was. I was tending bar in Suquamish, Washington, on the Indian reservation. It was my last job before I became a longshoreman.

[00:08:55] **HARVEY:** Okay. How did that come about, becoming a longshoreman?

[00:08:59] KRISTI: I had a friend named Tony that was a Teamster—he was actually a lover—and he used to drive onto the docks. And he said to me, “You know, you’ve got those two beautiful kids. You’re working for three bucks an hour in this dive. You’re big and strong. You ought to go down and try to extra longshore work.” And I said, “Yeah.” You know, I hadn’t a clue, not one clue, what a longshoreman did.

But he gave me an address of a place in Seattle, and it turns out it was the clerks hall, which I didn’t know at the time. And so for a brief time—maybe a week, maybe less or maybe more, I don’t really remember—I would close up the bar at 2:00, go home. And I can’t remember, the kids were probably spending the night at their babysitter’s on those nights, but I’d get a couple hours of sleep and then I’d get up and take the ferry boat to downtown Seattle and go to the clerks hall. And Pete [Colleen?], who was here, was the clerks’ dispatcher at the time. And after I went there for a few days in a row, one morning he looked at me and he said, “You know, who the hell are you?” [laughing] Because he’d seen me standing around in the hall. I said, “Well, you know, I heard there’s extra longshore work here for people.” And he said, “Kid, I’ve got a list of 300 people that I’d call before somebody that just walks in off the street. So forget it.” So, I forgot it.

I went home and kept working at the bar. Had a pretty serious alcohol addiction at the time. Got popped for another DUI—this was probably my sixth or seventh or eighth. In the space of 10 years, I went to 10 treatment centers. So I was raising my kids, but I was also doing a lot of drinking and stuff. But I always took care of my kids, in spite of my addictions. So I got popped for DUI in Suquamish, and they put me in jail for a year.

[00:11:27] HARVEY: Ooh! Okay.

[00:11:28] KRISTI: Six months, my mother took the kids, thank God. Thank you, Mom. Six months in Kitsap County, where Suquamish is, and then, because I had two concurrent DUIs, one in Kitsap and one in Seattle—oh, god, I was such a bad actor. Oh, it’s hard to believe I was so stupid. And so after six months, they transferred me to the King County Jail.

And when I was in the King County Jail, my friend, Tony—my savior—he’s dead now, but he’s an angel in heaven—went to the judge, got a special visit to come tell me that he’d seen in the paper that the Longshore Union was hiring people. This was 1980 when the feds had said, “Man, you’ve got to shake it up. You’ve got to get rid of the nepotism, you’ve got to bring in some women.” So Tony brought me—I didn’t actually see him, but he went to the judge and he got the permission to give this to me, the address where to send for my application. So I sent for my application. I had them send it to the King County Jail, and I think that must have cracked [laughing] the hiring committee up. “Who is this woman in the King County Jail?” They sent it to me, I filled it out, and a couple months later I get a letter telling me that I have an interview. I mean, of course I didn’t think anything was going to come of it.

So, Tony was keeping track of what was happening and he knew that—I don’t know if he got a visit, I can’t remember, it was a long time ago—but he knew that I needed to go to this interview. So he actually went to the judge and explained to him that this is a woman that’s got a lot of potential, she’s got beautiful kids, and she’s got a chance to be an apprentice at this great union job, and she just needs like a 48-hour release.” So he got it for me. He got me the release, and my mom and my kids came and picked me up and drove me to the interview. Then I went back to jail. Tony was still involved, and he—oh, and I got accepted in the pool. I got that letter, not having a clue what it meant, but knowing that Tony was saying it was a great thing. But I was still in jail. I still had a couple months left on my sentence. So Tony again went to the judge, and the judge gave me an early release to go to alcohol treatment, which I screwed up and got drunk, got thrown out. Had to go—do you really want to hear all this?

[00:14:22] HARVEY: Sure.

[00:14:23] **KRISTI:** Had to go back to my mother's house, and that's when I ended up calling Bob Lindsey, who was the president of Local 19 at the time. And, funny, I had known Bob because he had come in my bar. So he knew who I was, unbeknownst to me. I didn't realize who he was. But when I was talking to him on the phone, saying, "God, is it possible I can get another chance because I know I fucked up, and I'm ready to go back into treatment and complete it this time because I don't want to lose this opportunity," and that's when he told me, "Hey, I know you. I've been in your bar and you served me," blah blah blah. And so he did. He got me an extension. I ended up showing up at Local 19 like a month after everybody else because I went to alcohol treatment and completed it. Got released and started my career as a longshoreman.

[00:15:17] **HARVEY:** Wow, what an amazing story.

[00:15:21] **KRISTI:** Yeah. [laughing] I know.

[00:15:22] **HARVEY:** What was Tony's last name?

[00:15:25] **KRISTI:** Oh, shit, I don't know, I don't remember.

[00:15:29] **HARVEY:** Let me ask you another question. Tell me about your first day on the job as a longshore worker.

[00:15:38] **KRISTI:** My first day on the job was the wheat dock. And [Arnold Gunderson?] was the foreman and I was a sweeper, and he was just wonderful to me. He showed me exactly what to do and no bullshit. I just flat out told him, "Hey, this is my first day. I know you've seen everybody else for a month, but this is my first day. I don't have a clue what I'm doing." And he was just so cool, and it was like a weeklong job, and I'll never forget, at the end of the week he said to me, "Hagen, if all the new poolies are like you, the union's going to be okay." And this was a really well-respected foreman, you know? I mean, somebody that everybody loved, and he took no bullshit off anybody. He wasn't an ass-kisser or trying to get into my pants or anything. He was just a really right-on dude, you know? So, yeah, it was good.

[00:16:33] **HARVEY:** That's nice. A sweeper, you said?

[00:16:35] **KRISTI:** Sweeper at the wheat dock. There's belts that run the grain from the silo to the ship, and you have to sweep down the floor because all the corn or grain or whatever falls onto the floor.

[00:16:51] **HARVEY:** What jobs did you have after that?

[00:16:53] **KRISTI:** Oh, god, I had every job, you know. Apples, lashing —lashing was always my favorite. I loved it. I was big and strong and able to do it. You know, none of the other girls could. I mean, I was a lot thinner then, but I was strong.

[00:17:08] **HARVEY:** But you are tall and strong.

[00:17:10] **KRISTI:** Yeah, and tall helps. And I wasn't really that strong. I'd just got out of jail for six months, but I got stronger every day. I mean, I used to wake up with my whole body aching. But I loved it. It was just strange, I just loved it. I loved the physical work.

[00:17:26] **HARVEY:** Okay. Wow. What was your favorite cargo?

[00:17:40] **KRISTI:** Oh, well, lashing was my favorite job. There was no favorite cargo. You don't know what's in those containers for the most part, unless they're hides and they're leaking putrid crap all over your feet.

[00:17:51] **HARVEY:** Did you work hides at all?

[00:17:53] **KRISTI:** Not loading them, but lashing the containers that they were in, yes.

[00:17:58] **HARVEY:** Were they still messy lashing?

[00:18:00] **KRISTI:** Yeah, because all the stuff would drip out the bottom and you'd be walking in it. But you didn't get covered in it, just your shoes got grubby. But I liked working in the hold, too, you know, like loading apples. I just liked physical work, anything physical. I didn't like standing around. I didn't want to be a clerk, I didn't want to be a checker. I wouldn't even take those jobs because I wanted to be tough and strong, and prove to everybody that I was the one woman that could do it. And I was, everybody said I was, you know, the one woman who could actually do the job. And that made me so proud. I mean, it was really good for my self-esteem.

[00:18:37] **HARVEY:** Okay.

[00:18:37] **KRISTI:** But I finally found a job, or a place, you know, a home. God, you know? Even though at first, I mean, of course there was a lot of antagonism towards the women.

[00:18:50] **HARVEY:** Can you describe that?

[00:18:53] **KRISTI:** Well, I already Ron this story, but one of the first jobs I had was at SeaLand as a stevedore on the dock. When I got to the job, there were fliers all over the lunchroom. I picked one up and read it, just one page typed up, mimeographed or whatever fliers. And it was this whole diatribe about "This is a man's job," and, "We don't want these women down here," and, "We can't allow"—you get the idea. It was just a lot of macho bullshit. And it was clearly signed, Clem Head. And it just so happens that Clem Head was on that job, and I was ballsy enough to walk up to him and say, "Hey, man"—I didn't call him brother because I didn't know that we were brothers yet at that point—"What is this shit?" Whatever. I don't remember what I said to him. I don't remember the conversation at all, but I know we became really good friends—maybe not at that minute or that job, but we became good friends.

[00:20:00] **HARVEY:** Were there other instances of difficulties with guys?

[00:20:06] **KRISTI:** You know, not really, because I used to just give back as good as I got. I didn't let it bother me. Like with Big Al [Witzler?], he used to—well, he always did—we'd be laughing together, and I'd come off the ship with greasy handprints all over the ass of my coveralls. But it was funny. It was like flirtatious and funny. It didn't offend me at all. And I told Ron this as well—I'm kind of repeating my same stories, but they're the ones that stick out in my head—with Al, it was just funny. I never felt like he was harassing me or trying to—I mean, I never felt threatened by him at all. He's just a big, goofy guy, and he does the same thing with the men as the women. He's the kind of guy who will, you know, wrestle you and grab you from behind. Just that kind of big, goofy, playful guy. One night in the hall, though, I walked in the hall and he's there, and everybody's sitting around the outside, and he grabs my boob. And so I turned around and I grabbed his crotch, and I said, as loud as I could, "Hey, Big Al"—because that's his nickname—I said, "How come they call you Big Al? I can't feel anything in here." And the whole hall just fucking exploded with laughter. They couldn't believe it. So that's the last time he ever tried to grab my boob. That's just the way I handled shit—that's the way I chose to handle shit down there. You know, just be one of the guys.

I respected their workspace. One of my first jobs was driving [bull?] on was it paper rolls or aluminum rolls, I'm not sure, but big rolls. And I'm on the bull, and I've got one and I'm ready to stow it, and three other guys in the hatch are yelling at me "Put it in the cunt! Put it in the cunt!" And they're waiting for me to get offended, and I just started laughing because it was obvious what they were saying. "Here's a slit, and it's the cunt." I mean, I just realized right then and there, this is the language they've been using for how many years? And I'm going to show up and tell them they can't talk like that or I'm offended? So from that point on, I just tried to say "fuck, fuck, fuck" as many—and it offended some of the old-timers because I was out-cussing them by a mile. My purpose was just to show them they didn't have to change for me, I was so grateful to be there. So grateful to be there. My god, this job, and all of a sudden I had money in the bank and my kids had benefits.

Just great people to work with, too. I never felt like somebody hated me enough or hated me being down there enough to try to really hurt me. There was this old Italian guy that was really sleazy and he was always trying to make it some nasty sexual shit to me, but I just, oh, fuck off, you little creep. [laughing] So there was a couple sleazy guys, but most of the guys were just . . . I worked really hard to get respect, and I respected them, too.

[00:23:28] **HARVEY:** How long until you became a walking boss?

[00:23:35] **KRISTI:** Okay, well, that's a whole nother story. Don [Minnikin?], who was the president of Local 98 at the time—this is many, many years ago, and I was still drinking, I was still an alcoholic, but so was everybody else on the docks. So, again, I felt I'd come home. We used to sit and drink together in [Shohan's?] Cafe, and he'd be running his hand up my leg slowly but surely and telling me, "Kristi, the East Coast mafia has contacted me and they've told me that I have"—I mean, just some bullshit story, I don't even remember what it was, but somebody somehow involved with the mafia was giving him pressure to make a woman a foreman at Local 98. "And it's going to be you, Kristi." Fuck you, Don. I liked him, but I didn't fuck a lot of guys down there. My job was too important to me. You know? I wasn't going to do that.

And I was always so mouthy and bossy that, time after time, people would say to me, "God, you're going to be the first woman foreman. You just are. We can see it." And so I started to believe it. I started to believe it was a possibility. I was registered in 1980, so it must have been probably 85 that I was qualified to start calling in for casual foreman jobs around there, and so I started calling in. I started taking jobs, and it was okay. It wasn't my favorite job. It was standing around. It was like being a glorified clerk on the ship, but the pay was great, and the prestige of being the only woman that anybody knew about that was actually doing it was good. So I'd boss two or three—if there was a lot of work, which there was in those days, I'd boss a couple shifts a week and lash the rest of the time. I was still on the stevedore board, and that was the best of both worlds, you know, boss for a couple of days and go back and do some work, get off early, drop and go. Even a 10-, 12-hour lash back, it made no difference to me. Well, you know, drops are always better [laughing] when you can leave early, but, you know.

I really didn't want to be a boss. I didn't want to be a full-time boss because it was not my favorite job. But there was a set of circumstances that happened that started that ball rolling. My friend, Ronnie Bulis, who was probably in his mid-sixties at the time, and [Louie Gray?], who was a Black guy in probably his early sixties, had a discrimination lawsuit, because Ronnie was suing for ageism and to be a boss. Both of them had shitloads of casual foreman hours. So Ronnie's suit was ageism, Louie's suit was racism. They told their lawyers about me. "Well, here's Kristi," blah blah blah. "Well, if you can get her to come in on the lawsuit, then you'll have sexism, and wham! Triple whammy." So they're talking to me and I was like "You know, guys, I really don't want to be a boss." So I started thinking about it. Well, whatever, I'll see how it goes.

Right about this time, a member of Local 98, [John Ross?] — he was a dynamite crane operator, but then he and his brother both became foremen—actually walked up to me on the job and said to me, "Kristi, we all know that you're qualified to be a foreman, but we don't want to be the first local on the West Coast to take in a woman."

And I went, what? What did I just hear? And it wasn't long after that I was working at Matson, who used to hire me as a casual foreman quite frequently, and the nighttime superintendent—because I worked nights all the time—came up to me one night and said, "Kristi, are you aware of the process for advancement into Local 98?" And I said, "Well, just vaguely." And he said, "Well, here's how it works. When the employers want to add to the foremen's pool, they go around to the companies and they have the superintendents make a list of the casual foremen that they think should be advanced. I just wanted you to know this. I tried to put your name on that list, and"—whoever it was at the PMA [Pacific Maritime Association] , I don't believe he told me a name—"told me, quote, 'We can't put her on the list. She's a woman.'" And again, my head exploded, because I never imagined that that glass ceiling was there, because, fuck, for how many years, people have been telling me, "They're grooming you to be the first woman foreman"? Grooming me, my ass. [laughing] That's the last thing they wanted. They would let me be a casual, but to actually advance into their hallowed ranks, no fucking way. So after that, after Clay told me that—Clay, the superintendent—I was just dumbfounded. And I didn't even want to be a boss. I really didn't. I just liked the way it was, casual stevedore, just have the options. But, yeah, so I told Ronnie and Louie that I would join their lawsuit. And it turned out that I'm the only one out of the three that actually won the lawsuit. The other two guys lost. Fuck whatever.

[00:29:53] **HARVEY:** You were the only one of the three that won?

[00:29:54] **KRISTI:** Yeah. They took us separately. They took me first, and I won, and then Ronnie. I can't remember if they even actually—I don't know, but I know they never became foremen.

[00:30:07] **HARVEY:** About what year is this?

[00:30:11] **KRISTI:** About 97.

[00:30:16] **HARVEY:** Did you get pushback from some of the guys over the fact that you were a foreman now?

[00:30:22] **KRISTI:** Oh, shit. Oh, yeah.

[00:30:24] **HARVEY:** Do you have a couple of instances?

[00:30:25] **KRISTI:** Oh, I had the lashers one night on a ship, and they're up on the catwalk lashing containers and I'm walking down below just keeping an eye on everybody, walking the ship and making sure people were working. And I hear these guys say, "Oh, fuck that Hagen. Don't let her tell us anything. She had to sue. If she was any good, she wouldn't have had to sue." [laughing] You know, shit like that all the time. Just from the young punks, not from the older guys. The older guys in Local 19 were all on my—well, I can't say all, but they were my friends. They knew I was a hard worker. They knew I deserved it. Local 98, I got a lot of pushback. Jack Block—I don't know if you know him, the former Port commissioner in Seattle—was a total asshole. Whatever.

[00:31:14] **HARVEY:** In what way?

[00:31:15] **KRISTI:** Well [sighs] I told you about Big Al Witzler, the guy who was all goofy and grabby in the hall. Well, we just had this flirtatious thing going, right? So one day, we're upstairs, and I'm a boss—I'm not 100 percent sure—yeah, I was a boss already. It must have been after I won the suit or before, I don't know. And Al was sitting in a chair, and so I sat on his lap and like wiggled my ass. And Jack Block saw me, and [Al Meads?] , who was another foreman asshole—I hope you won't put names in there—and the next thing I know, I'm getting a letter from the PMA [Pacific Maritime Association] that I'd been cited for lewd and lascivious behavior on the job.

[NOTE: She asked to seal the names.]

Here's the thing. I knew this was coming. Here's the first thing I had them put in when I won my lawsuit. No travel, because I knew there was guys in Seattle that would watch my back, and nobody would [set a can?] on me. Number two, if anybody harassed me to the degree that I thought was serious—oh, that's another part of the story I didn't tell you. I was awarded . . . what was I awarded? Oh, a shitload of money in the lawsuit—what was it—\$250,000—a quarter of a million—and the guys in 98 were just crying, crying, crying, “Oh, fuck, we can't afford to pay her that” and blah blah blah. And so, like the idiot that I am, I said, “I don't want the money, I just want the job.” But I had a clause put in in the award that said if anybody harasses me, I get the whole fucking award. So I sit up in front of the Local 98 membership one night and I said, “This asshole and this asshole, we all know what they're doing. And you better fucking stop or you're going be digging deep in your pockets.” So I gave up a quarter of a million dollars. What an idiot. Just because I just—I didn't even want the job. I would have rather had the money, but I didn't want the—I don't know what I was trying to do.

[00:33:31] **HARVEY:** It's kind of a matter of principle.

[00:33:32] **KRISTI:** Yeah, I guess. Or trying to be, you know, the greatest, everybody's friend. You know? [sighs] Whatever.

[00:33:45] **HARVEY:** Yeah. And how long were you a boss?

[00:33:51] **KRISTI:** Oh, up until the end. There was an incident where a guy got killed on the job on my watch—Joe Alesio was his name. He was out in the rail yard at APL in Seattle, and we had two gangs, and we were just working. Same old shit. Everybody said—I mean, there's a lot of bosses that just don't give a shit, you know? I considered my people's safety my number one priority, so I always gave a safety talk, I always made sure people were working safe. I took pride in that. You know, what else are you doing as a boss? Standing around doing nothing, really. If you can't keep your people safe, what the hell are you doing? So that was a matter of pride, and everybody said that I was the safest boss. And, lo and behold, one night a guy gets run over by the top pick. Squashed flat. So I'm . . . it was bizarre because my husband had just brought me my lunch. He's out in the parking lot. I mean, I don't feel guilty because I had two gangs, I didn't sit and watch them all night to make sure nothing happened. Sometimes I had to be in the lunchroom making out the payroll, or taking a pee or whatever. So I ran out to the parking lot really quick to pick up the lunch. Next thing I know, I hear this really stressed-out voice. “Kristi, we need you out here right now.” I drive out, Alesio was just flat, he was like a pancake, and I had to get a . . . I took the blanket out of the back of my car and laid it over him. And one of the guys said, “Well, he's got little kids, so can you get the cap off his head? I can give it to his son.” And so I went and picked the cap off his head and . . . that was it. The dock shut down, and somebody was dead and I had to call up to upstairs and say, “Hey, we need the police here.” “Do you need an ambulance?” “Nope, we don't need an ambulance. He's dead.” So . . . so . . . don't ask me what year that was because I don't know, but I know it was April 17 because I'll never forget that day.

[00:36:10] **HARVEY:** Yeah. It's dangerous. This industry is dangerous.

[00:36:16] **KRISTI:** Yes, that's why they pay us the big bucks. Absolutely. But the weirdest thing was I'd never been scared on the job before ever, and I had PTSD, no doubt about it. I went on the ship, you know, I'd go on a ship to do a job, and the container would clang or something and I'd jump. I'd never been like that before. And I knew that was making it dangerous for me, to be so ginchy all the time. Yeah, that was when I went and got help for PTSD. And, you know, fuck it. I can't be scared up here. You can't be scared and do your job, so I retired.

[00:37:02] **HARVEY:** What year was it that you retired?

[00:37:04] **KRISTI:** I think it was 2006. I'm pretty sure.

[00:37:15] **HARVEY:** So you'd been 26 years, is that right?

[00:37:18] **KRISTI:** No, 30 years as a longshoreman—no, what's 1980 to 2006?

[00:37:29] **HARVEY:** That's 26 years, I think.

[00:37:30] **KRISTI:** I don't know, I had more than that. I retired with 30 years, so I must have retired later than that.

[00:37:39] **HARVEY:** Would that have been about 2010?

[00:37:41] **KRISTI:** Yeah, it must have been.

[00:37:42] **HARVEY:** That would have been from 80 to 2010.

[00:37:44] **KRISTI:** Yeah, of course.

[00:37:47] **HARVEY:** So it was probably 2010.

[00:37:47] **KRISTI:** Yeah.

[00:37:53] **HARVEY:** Were you married at that time?

[00:37:55] **KRISTI:** Uh . . . well, I was with Pete but I can't . . . we lived together for a lot of years before we got married.

[00:38:05] **HARVEY:** Is he Pete Hagen?

[00:38:06] **KRISTI:** No, Pete [Gardner?] . He was a Merchant seaman, and then he became a longshoreman, and became a crane operator. Now he's retired as well.

[00:38:17] **HARVEY:** Is he in [Local] 19?

[00:38:19] **KRISTI:** Yeah.

[00:38:21] **HARVEY:** Very interesting. And then you moved to Hawaii a few years ago?

[00:38:25] **KRISTI:** Yeah, about a year and a half ago, May of 2015, I guess.

[00:38:33] **HARVEY:** And what are your kids doing?

[00:38:35] **KRISTI:** They're both longshoremen in Local 19.

[00:38:39] **HARVEY:** They both are?

[00:38:39] **KRISTI:** Yeah, my daughter and my son.

[00:38:41] **HARVEY:** That's great. What made you be interested in the PCPA?

[00:38:48] **KRISTI:** Mary. It's all Mary's fault. You know, she's so involved in it. Of course, she lost her husband and, you know. But she just told me, "You've got to come down. It's really fun." And now she's got that health problem, and I said to Cindy, "Hey, we don't know, none of us. We're all getting up there. Christ. So let's all go down and just be together, the three of us. Who cares about anybody else, or whatever else is happening." I've really changed my idea about that since being here. It's just been great to see people I hadn't seen in a while. I'm not a real social person, so I'm not like introducing myself to people. Once in a while, I'll say something, and when I do, I get a good reaction. I told Ida in the hospitality that I was the first woman foreman, and she was like "Oh, my god! Here's my card and send me your story because I want to know about it." I love it when I get that kind of reaction. Women give me that reaction; guys, not necessarily so much. [laughing]

[00:39:47] **HARVEY:** That's interesting, a very interesting observation.

[00:39:49] **KRISTI:** Yeah, well, you know.

[00:39:52] **HARVEY:** Maybe [unintelligible] because I thought, oh my goodness gracious, I need to interview you.

[00:39:57] **KRISTI:** Well, you're a rarity, I guess.

[00:40:02] **HARVEY:** Did I miss anything important in this discussion?

[00:40:04] **KRISTI:** Oh, I don't know. I don't think so.

[00:40:11] **HARVEY:** Any wrap-up comment, looking back, what it's meant and so forth? What it's meant to you?

[00:40:16] **KRISTI:** Oh, you know, the gratitude I have for the union and the love I have for the people down here that I worked with over the years, it's just unbelievable. The life that I've had has been so blessed, you know. And now my kids, too. Not just me but the whole family, the whole ohana, as we say in Hawaii. The longshore family, it's truly a family. And the wages and benefits, you know, if Trump doesn't take them away from us, or, you know. I mean, who knows what the future is going to bring? But, yeah. And that's why I'm so glad I'm here, too. It's not just to hang with my sisters, which is wonderful because . . . because. But listening to the guys talk in the meeting this morning, and renewing my sense of pride in being a longshoreman. And I think I'm going to cry over this—and going out and seeing the yards, and seeing the work that we did. You know, I'm just so proud of that. I'm so proud of it, and so grateful to the union for that.

And I'm not going to be an active retiree because I'm in Hawaii. I probably wouldn't be active if I was in Seattle still because I'm a kind of person that likes to just do my own thing. I'm not much of a joiner. But, yeah, it's given me back—I don't know, I'm trying to say a lot of things to wrap it up and whatever.

[00:41:53] **HARVEY:** It's all good.

[00:41:54] **KRISTI:** Okay. I didn't tell you about this. When I met Pete, when he was still a Merchant seaman, he took me out on the APL Harrison. I got to sign on the articles as librarian, and they paid me a dollar a day. And it was something that the Merchant seamen could do, they could take their wives with them. And so I went on the 30-day round trip to the Orient and that was so cool. I'd probably been a longshoreman for about 10 years then. And to go out on the Harrison, which I'd probably lashed a hundred times, but just to get on the ship and to see it, where it goes after it left the Port of Seattle, and what my work had done. And to see them in Japan come up and, you know, just the whole thing was just very cool. It was very cool. I used to go out on the deck

and walk at night and just look up at the hatches where I'd lashed so many times. You know, I just like that kind of shit. [laughing]

[00:42:47] **HARVEY:** That was great.

[00:42:49] **KRISTI:** I just enjoy that kind of stuff.

[00:42:52] **HARVEY:** That's a good little story. Anything else we need to add?

[00:42:58] **KRISTI:** I don't think so.

[00:43:00] **HARVEY:** Thank you, Kristi. Thank you very much.

[00:43:01] **KRISTI:** You're welcome. Did you get anything you can use out of me?

[00:43:05] **HARVEY:** Yes. Much appreciated. It's very useful.